

**Amendments to the claims:**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) An assembly for treating degeneration of a damaged intervertebral disk disposed between two vertebrae, the said assembly being characterized ~~in that it comprises~~ ing:

- cells ~~(16)~~ optionally analogous to those of the intervertebral disk, and suitable for being implanted in said disk; and
- an intervertebral implant ~~(10)~~ comprising:
  - an intervertebral spacer ~~(12)~~ for placing between said vertebrae in order to limit the stresses applied to said disk; and
  - fastener means ~~(14)~~ for fastening said spacer to said vertebrae.

2. (currently amended) A treatment assembly according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said cells ~~(16)~~ are as obtained by being taken from an intervertebral disk of the patient and culturing said cells as taken.

3. (currently amended) A treatment assembly according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said cells ~~(16)~~ are such as obtained by taking autologous adult stem cells from the bone marrow of the patient and by culturing said cells.

4. (currently amended) A treatment assembly according to claim 1, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said cells ~~(16)~~ are such as obtained by taking embryonic stem cells and by culturing said cells.

5. (currently amended) A treatment assembly according to ~~any one of~~ claims 1 to ~~4~~, ~~characterized in that it~~ further comprising injector means ~~(20)~~ for injecting said implantable cells ~~(16)~~ into the intervertebral disk of the patient.

6. (currently amended) A treatment assembly according to ~~any one of~~ claims 1 to ~~5~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said spacer ~~(12)~~ of said intervertebral implant comprises a central portion ~~(26)~~ and two end portions ~~(28, 30)~~, each end portion having a groove ~~(32, 34)~~ defined by two limbs ~~(29, 31)~~, said grooves being suitable for receiving the spinus process ~~(E<sub>1</sub>, E<sub>2</sub>)~~ of a vertebra ~~(V<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>2</sub>)~~.

7. (currently amended) A treatment assembly according to claim 6, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said central portion ~~(26)~~ of the spacer ~~(12)~~ is elastically deformable.

8. (currently amended) A treatment assembly according to claim 6, ~~or claim 7~~, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said fastener means ~~(14)~~ for fastening the intervertebral implant comprise at least one strip ~~(14)~~ securable to said spacer ~~(12)~~ and surrounding the processes ~~(E<sub>1</sub>, E<sub>2</sub>)~~ of said vertebrae so as to hold said processes in said grooves ~~(32, 34)~~.

9. (new) A treatment assembly according to claim 7, wherein said fastener means for fastening the intervertebral implant comprise at least one strip securable to said spacer and surrounding the processes of said vertebrae so as to hold said processes in said grooves.

10. (new) A method for healing degeneration of a damaged intervertebral disk disposed between two vertebrae, said method including the steps of :

- placing an intertebral implant between the processes of said vertebrae for limiting the stresses applied to said disk,

- injecting into said disk cells optionally analogous to those of the intertebral disk and suitable for being implanted in said disk; and

- fastening said intravertebral disk implant to said processes of the vertebrae.